United Nations A/54/7/Add.8

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 December 1999

Original: English

Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 121
Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Projects to be funded from the resources proposed under section 33, Development Account, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Ninth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Addendum

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/54/37) on the projects to be financed from the resources proposed under section 33 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.[1] During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and other representatives of the Secretary-General who provided additional information.

2. The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution 54/15 of 29 October 1999, decided to establish a special multi-year account for supplementary development activities based on the priority objectives of the approved medium-term plan, and provided the guidelines for the operation of the account. In its resolutions 53/220 A of 7 April 1999 and 53/220 B of 8 June 1999, the Assembly approved the financing of seven projects from the resources of $13,065,000 under section 34, Development Account, of the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

3. As indicated in paragraph 2 of the report of the Secretary-General, the total cost of the seven projects amounted to $12,945,000, leaving a balance of $120,000. The Advisory Committee was further informed that implementation of these projects started in July 1999, after the respective allotments were issued. The Committee recalls that the annual report of the first year of operation of the Development Account should be submitted for consideration by the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee, in May 2000.

4. During its consideration of this issue, the Advisory Committee discussed the support provided by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in the elaboration of the projects in question as well as in the implementation of some of them. The Committee trusts that this will not lead to the establishment of a structure within the Department in this regard. The Committee was also informed by the Under-Secretary-General of his awareness of the need to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation functions, so as better to measure the results achieved by the projects funded from the Development Account. The Committee further notes that in the absence of an agreement on performance indicators, the benchmarks used to measure the performance of the projects are the criteria set out by the

99-38350 (E) 101299

General Assembly in its resolutions 53/220 A and B (see para.8 below).

5. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 includes a provision of $13,065,000, the same level as for the biennium 1998-1999, under section 33, Development Account.[1] The Advisory Committee recalls that the Secretary-General, in his introduction to the report, indicates that information regarding initiatives by programme managers to improve productivity and enhance the quality of programme performance was not included because developments precluded such a procedure.[2] However, once the General Assembly completed its consideration of matters related to the Development Account, he would be in a position to report on the specific measures he would intend to apply in the context of implementing the budget for the biennium 2000-2001. As indicated in paragraph 2 above, the Assembly established the Development Account and the modalities for its use and operation in resolution 54/15. Upon inquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Secretary-General would therefore be able to submit his report in the spring of 2000.

6. The Secretary-General, in A/C.5/54/37, proposes to utilize the resources under section 33 of the proposed programme budget for 2000-2001 for the implementation of 16 projects whose total costs amount to $13,185,000, inclusive of the balance of $120,000 from the biennium 1998-1999, mentioned in paragraph 3 above. The Committee recalls that, in the context of its report A/53/7/Add.4, it had recommended that the proposed programme budget for 2000-2001 should include proposals for the full use of resources under the account, including any carry-over balance.

7. The Committee notes that the estimates shown in relation to the projects are indicative in nature and do not represent the exact amounts. Detailed estimates, which govern the expenditures of each project, are finalized at the time the allotments are issued.

8. The Advisory Committee commends the Secretary-General for the clarity and quality of the presentation of the projects proposed for implementation in document A/C.5/54/37. The Committee notes that the projects have been formulated on the basis of the guidelines and criteria set out by the General Assembly in its resolutions 53/220 A and B. According to those criteria, emphasis is to be placed on the promotion of development activities that, in their implementation, demonstrate the benefits accruing in building national capacities, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition; utilize the technical, human and other resources available in the developing countries; have multiplier effects and promote capacity-building in developing countries; and promote regional and interregional economic and technical cooperation among developing countries.

9. From the financial aspect, the Advisory Committee agrees with the proposals made by the Secretary-General in A/C.5/54/37 and recommends that the General Assembly approve them. The Advisory Committee is aware, in this instance, of the delay in the submission of the proposal for development projects to be funded under section 33 of the programme budget. However, the Committee recommends that, in future, a summary of project proposals be submitted to the Committee on Programme and Coordination, for their comments on the programmatic aspects of the proposal, before submission of fully detailed proposals for consideration by the Advisory Committee, which would make its recommendations to the General Assembly (Fifth Committee) on the financial aspect of the proposals. The Committee also recommends that the proposal be submitted to the Second Committee for their comments on the substance of the projects. The General Assembly would then be in a position to approve the development projects to be funded under section 33, Development Account, in conjunction with its approval of the programme budget for the biennium.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/54/6/Rev.1).

[2] Ibid., vol. I, para. 43.